

I oppose loosening the rules designed to promote and protect diversity of media ownership. These rules were adopted to ensure that the public would receive a diverse range of viewpoints from the media, and not simply the opinions of a handful of media conglomerates. The cable ownership

cap is a crucial element of our democratic media, and it should not be weakened.

I strongly believe that the FCC should keep its regulatory role in media affairs. The Telecommunications Act of 1996 and the weakening of rules that restricted the ownership of broadcast outlets and newspapers worried me as a Journalism student. Now, the proposed weakening of the cable ownership cap has me concerned. When will the FCC stand firm and stop caving in to corporate interests?

It's only logical that without rules such as the cable ownership cap, large media companies will tend to buy out smaller companies and add them to their empires, reducing the overall competition in the media. Unfortunately, money and the desire to please powerful lobbyists often obscure logic.

Without some government regulation, we turn large media conglomerates such as AOL Time Warner loose with hope that they will "play nice" and be profitable for America's economy. After they have tugged and whined to get their way, they play like greedy children, but with very serious results.

The ownership of cable by a handful of large companies not only diminishes the diversity of viewpoints and racial/ethnic backgrounds to which the public is exposed through television, but it also gives these companies power over the most important emerging media, the Internet. Many people are turning to cable connections for their Internet access through services such as Roadrunner. By giving cable companies more ownership power over cable, we are also giving them the opportunity to monopolize access to the Internet, the one of the most free and democratic forms of media in existence.

I believe that if the public were truly informed and educated about this issue, the majority would also oppose relaxing the cap. Do not take advantage of the American people and slip this under our noses while tragedy, holidays and recession distract us. I urge the FCC to retain the cable ownership cap.